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***NEWS From:***

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**Congressman Mike Honda**

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**FIFTEENTH DISTRICT - CALIFORNIA**

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**Rep. Honda to Introduce Resolution on Incarceration of Americans  
During WWII, Outraged Over Recent Statements by Rep. Coble**

WASHINGTON, Feb. 5, 2003 — Today, Rep. Mike Honda (D-San Jose) will introduce a resolution in the U.S. Congress recognizing February 19th as a "Day of Remembrance" for the signing of Executive Order 9066. Signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1942, E.O. 9066 authorized the incarceration of more than 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry in the U.S. during WW II.

Americans of Italian and German descent also faced severe restrictions by measures that branded them enemy aliens and included required identification cards, travel restrictions, seizure of personal property, and internment. As a child, Rep. Honda was interned in Colorado during WWII.

"Executive Order 9066 is nothing to be proud of," commented Honda. "Today, our country is again in a time of war. It is important for us all to realize that gross violations of civil liberties and disregard for constitutional rights are always possible if we are not vigilant."

"The need for raising the awareness of this shameful chapter in U.S. history is more apparent than ever," said Honda, responding to press reports from Feb. 5 that Rep. Howard Coble said he agreed with the internment of Japanese Americans. Coble justified: "We were at war. They (Japanese-Americans) were an endangered species. For many of these Japanese-Americans, it wasn't safe for them to be on the street." Honda dismissed this remark as preposterous. "If we were incarcerated for our safety, why were we inside the barbed wire fences, and why were the gun towers facing us?" asked Honda.

Rep. Coble, who is Chairman of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security, also said Japanese-Americans "probably were intent on doing harm to us ... just as some of these Arab-Americans are probably intent on doing harm to us."

In the last half-century, various communities have observed a “Day of Remembrance” on February 19th to honor the distinct experiences of those that were interned. February 19th is neither a day to celebrate, nor a day to mourn. Rather, it is a day for reflection, dialogue and education.

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Following is the text of the resolution:

Supporting the goals of the Japanese American, German American, and Italian American communities in recognizing a National Day of Remembrance to increase public awareness of the events surrounding the restriction, exclusion and internment of individuals and families during World War II.

Whereas President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942, which authorized the exclusion of 120,000 Japanese Americans and legal resident aliens from the West coast of the United States and the internment of United States citizens and legal permanent residents of Japanese ancestry in internment camps during World War II;

Whereas the freedom of Italian Americans and German Americans was also restricted during World War II by measures that branded them enemy aliens and included required identification cards, travel restrictions, seizure of personal property, and internment;

Whereas President Gerald Ford formally rescinded Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1976, in his speech, "An American Promise";

Where Congress adopted legislation which was signed by President Jimmy Carter on July 31, 1980, establishing the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians to investigate the claim that the incarceration for Japanese Americans and legal resident aliens during World War II was justified by military necessity;

Whereas the Commission held 20 days of hearings and heard from over 750 witnesses on this matter and published its findings in a report entitled "Personal Justice Denied";

Whereas the conclusion of the Commission was that the promulgation of Executive Order 9066 was not justified by military necessity, and that the decision to issue the order was shaped by "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership";

Whereas Congress enacted the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 in which it apologized on behalf of the Nation for "fundamental violations of the basic civil liberties and constitutional rights of these individuals of Japanese ancestry";

Whereas President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 in law on August 10, 1988, proclaiming that day to be "a great day for America";

Whereas the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 established the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund, the purpose of which is "to sponsor research and public educational activities and to publish and distribute the hearings, findings and recommendations of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians so that the events surrounding the exclusion, forced removal, and internment of civilians and permanent resident aliens of Japanese ancestry will be remembered, and so that the causes and circumstances of this and similar events may be illuminated and understood";

Whereas Congress adopted the Wartime Violation of Italian Americans Civil Liberties Act, which was signed by President Bill Clinton on November 7, 2000, which included provisions which resulted in a report containing detailed information on the types of violations that occurred, as well as lists of individuals of Italian ancestry that were arrested, detained and interned,

Whereas the Japanese American community recognizes a National Day of Remembrance of February 19th of each year to educate the public about the lessons learned from the internment to ensure that it never happens again;

Whereas the Day of Remembrance provides an opportunity for all people to reflect on the importance of justice and civil liberties during times of uncertainty and emergency;

Resolved, That the House of Representatives

1. recognizes the historical significance of February 19, 1942, the date Executive Order 9066 was signed by President Roosevelt, restricting the freedom of Japanese Americans, German Americans, and Italian Americans, and legal resident aliens through required identification cards, travel restrictions, seizure of personal property, and internment; and
2. supports the goals of the Japanese American, German American and Italian American communities in recognizing a National Day of Remembrance to increase public awareness of these events.